

# THE NEWS

BRUCE CHAMP, Publisher.

PARIS. : : KENTUCKY

## THE KENTUCKY RACE.

TOLD AT THE OLD RATTLES MEETING.  
Hev you heard about that famous race o' forty y'ars ago,  
Way down in Ole Kentucky? Twuz a rattler—  
don't you know?  
From Paducah to Paducah, not a feller see that  
But what laid right down an' laughed—ha, ha,  
Twas give-out round in Lexin'ton the race  
wuz free an' fair.  
"Fur sez best that had four legs an' grew a  
crop o' hair."  
An' every chap that hed a nag fur twenty  
towns wuz thar.

The day it jst wuz gorg'us, an' the track it  
wuz slow.  
The bosses they wuz anxious fur the tussle—  
don't you know!  
When up thar come a-ridin', right afore the  
race-course full.  
Ole Athalar Jefferson, astraddle on a bull!  
He hed a tin horn in his hand an' spurs upon  
his boots.  
An' sich a yell! never heard ef come from  
them galoots.  
The fellers on the horses flunked, an' claimed  
it wuz a squar.  
The judges laughed to split the' sides, but  
said the race wuz fair.  
"Fur any beast that hed four legs an' grew a  
crop o' hair."

So the judges they got ready, an' they giv' the  
word to go.  
An' bull an' horses started all together—don't  
you know?  
When sudden Athalar giv' a toot upon his  
horn.  
An' struck his spurs into the bull. Ez sure ef  
you wuz born.  
The bull began to beller an' the horses flew the  
track.  
He took the lead, a-totin' Athalar on his back.  
An' round he come a-rushin', with his tail up  
in the air.  
The judges said the pot wuz his—that he hed  
won it fair.  
"He wuz a critter, on four legs that grew a  
crop o' hair."

Sich a laughin', sich a hootin', sich a howlin'—  
ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha,  
The State o' Ole Kentucky never know, or  
heard or saw.  
Ole Athalar took the pot—the bull an' he had  
won.  
The crowd it sided with the bull, an' hollered  
at the fun.  
The owners o' the horses they began to cuss  
an' swear.  
They said that Athalar hedn't won upon the  
square.  
"That horn o' his'n hedn't legs nor any crop o'  
hair."

Then up spoke Athalar: "Boys, I'll lay the ole  
horn by!  
"Fur you've got a hundred dollars, you kin hev  
another try.  
I'll put the pot agin it, for I'm willin'—don't  
you know?  
To giv' you satisfaction, if you'll giv' me eny  
slow."  
They up an' raised the money in a jiffy then  
an' thar—  
Each owner o' an animal a-chippin' in a shair  
To beat Ole Athalar an' his beast with legs'n  
hair."

Away agin' they started with a whoop an' big  
holler!  
That bull o' Athalar's, how he bellered—don't  
you know?  
There wuzn't a boss among 'em all that shov'd  
a speck o' sense.  
Jehial Buford's thoro'bred jist threw him thro'  
the fence.  
Some stoed the' riders on the' heads, some  
scampered from the track.  
An' half-a-dozen turned the' tails an' come  
a-croottin' back.  
While right about that critter tore, and jist ez  
sure ez sin  
He wuz, an' Athalar scooped another hundred  
in.

An' when afore the judges stand the bull come  
salin' by.  
With tail a-stickin' out behind, I tho't that  
crowd woudn't be  
The yell it giv'—ha, ha, ha, ha—'t fairly  
shook the air.  
The bosses led, an' never since huz race been  
free an' fair.  
"Fur eny beast that hed four legs an' grew a  
crop o' hair."  
—From "Away Out West," by Eugene J. Hall.

## JOE BARRETT'S CONFESSION.

One seventeenth day of August, not  
many years ago, a party of four, con-  
sisting of Joe Barrett and his wife, their  
most intimate friend, Phil Somers, and  
Miss Maude Mortimer, a young lady  
they hoped he might be induced to con-  
sider the future happiness of his exis-  
tence, stood quite alone upon a narrow  
strip of sand on the Long Island coast,  
not far from the great metropolis. Joe  
Barrett and his wife had long ago been  
given over by their relatives and friends,  
and the genial circle of society they  
adorned, as an old-fashioned couple  
that prolonged their honeymoon to a  
most unprecedented and unheard-of  
period. They had lately celebrated  
their silver wedding, and for the amuse-  
ment of others and the romance for  
themselves would have gone through  
with the original ceremony again had it  
not been for a serious obstacle. The  
clergyman was still alive, and vigorous  
for his years, and Phil Somers, Joe's  
best man at his wedding, was yet his  
best friend, but the pale, pretty little  
bride had vanished long ago off the  
face of the earth, and become one of  
that shadowy band to which "we call,  
and they answer not again."

There was a rumor that if she had  
lived she would have become the wife of  
Phil Somers, thus making the happiness  
of the four complete. It was currently  
believed that because of this tender and  
romantic episode of his life, Phil Somers  
had remained a bachelor. In his  
younger days this apparent halo of soft  
regret and unappeasable longing lent a  
melancholy grace to his already pleas-  
ing exterior, and many a damsel en-  
deavored to console him; but although  
he was gentle, and even chivalric, to all  
womankind, he remained, to all mat-  
rimonial intent and purposes, unconsoled.  
And here he was, a bachelor still, fifty  
years old, getting rather grizzled about  
the temples and crow-footed about the  
eyes, bronzed by his partiality for the  
open air, thin but muscular, tall but  
straight; while Joe Barrett and his wife  
might both pass for "fat, fair, and  
forty," though they were not so many  
years Phil's juniors.

And here they were, plotting as lively  
as ever for Phil's connubial bliss. The  
present victim of their toils, although  
no longer in her first youth, would have  
seemed so in any other light but the  
critical one of sun against sand and  
now that thick bands of gray clouds lay  
heavily across the sky, tempering the  
brilliance of the sun's rays, and the  
young lady had pulled her veil about  
the outline of her face, Miss Mortimer  
seemed at the heyday of her charms.

While waiting for dinner, which was  
in process of preparation in a long low  
hostelry a dozen furlongs or so inland,  
they had strolled down to the water's  
edge, and, true to the plan in hand, Joe  
Barrett had pulled his wife's chubby  
hand through his and trotted her  
away from Phil and the young lady.

"Let's leave them alone together for a  
while," said Joe. "It seems a propitious  
time for love-making, and I hope some-  
thing will come of to-day's trip, Polly;

I'm getting awfully tired of working  
like a pack-horse for Phil's happiness."  
While strolling along, they indulged  
in a spirited conversation about Phil and  
the matrimonial projects in which they  
had been engaged on his account. At  
last Joe remarked, looking fondly at his  
wife: "I'd be the happiest fellow in the  
world if Phil could be happy, too."

His wife shook his arm impatiently.  
"See here, Joe," she said, "I think  
you are absurd about Phil Somers, and  
you may as well understand, once for  
all, that if this thing falls through, I'm  
not going to bother about his marrying  
at all. It's none of your business or  
mine. I don't believe he wants to  
marry, anyway. Some natures are so  
constituted that they can only love once,  
and I believe all the love Phil had to give  
any one was squandered long ago on our  
dear little bridemaid. After all,  
there's something very sweet and touch-  
ing in his remaining faithful to the one  
memory all these years."

Joe shifted uneasily from one foot to  
the other. He picked up a stone, and  
sent it savagely whirling over the water.  
"Polly," he said, "I think I'll take a  
plunge in the sea; it will tone me up,  
and give me an appetite for dinner.  
There's a bathing suit in one of the little  
cribs behind us."

"Look at that big black cloud, Joe,"  
said Polly. "I won't stay in long, Polly." He  
gave his wife a tender squeeze, looked  
down upon her with an expression that  
seemed to say he'd kiss her if it wouldn't  
shock Miss Mortimer's sense of propri-  
ety, ran up to the bathing-house, and,  
to the surprise of Phil and Miss Mort-  
imer, presently disappeared in a huge  
green wave that covered them with its  
spray.

"Joe is a regular water-dog," said  
Phil.  
Miss Mortimer made no reply. She  
had not come down to the sea-shore  
that day to listen to laudations of Joe  
Barrett and his wife. Miss Mortimer  
felt that she had no time to lose, and  
was resolved to waste no words upon  
Joe Barrett's maritime proclivities.

Phil, however, kept his eyes upon Joe  
as he swam out to the open sea, and  
went on talking about him without re-  
quiring any special reply.

"Joe is a little impulsive and reckless,  
perhaps," said Phil, "but he's a capital  
swimmer."

"It is growing cold," said Miss Mor-  
timer, contracting her shoulders in that  
graceful way that some women have of  
making even a shiver attractive.

Phil remembered with remorse that  
her wrap was hanging forgotten upon  
his arm. He hastened to put it about  
her shoulders, but the wind, which was  
rising to a gale, made the effort a pro-  
longed one.

"Don't you hate the wind?" said Miss  
Mortimer, coquettishly.

"I am never ungrateful," said Phil,  
capturing the ends of the shawl again,  
and holding them fast this time about  
her slender form. A keen look of in-  
cident triumph flashed from Miss Mor-  
timer's eyes. Phil's words always seemed  
to mean so much more than they said.  
And she could not, unfortunately,  
see that his eyes were still looking fixed  
over her head upon the water beyond  
the surf.

A shaft or two of wild light flashed  
down the scene. An ominous rumble  
from the clouds mingled with the roar  
of the sea. Suddenly the earth and sky  
were enveloped in a blinding glare. In  
this spectral light Phil distinctly saw  
Joe Barrett fling his arms wildly aloft,  
and disappear in the darkening waste.

Phil threw off his shoes and his coat  
as he ran to the sea, and Miss Mortimer  
had great difficulty in rescuing his vest,  
which was nearly carried out by a re-  
turning wave. Her costume was  
denuded with the spray, and she nearly  
lost her footing; but she saved the waist-  
coat, which contained Phil's watch and  
other valuables. Then she hurried to  
the shelter of the bathing-houses, for  
the rain now began to fall heavily.  
Through the blackness of the storm she  
saw the white face of a woman. Miss  
Mortimer knew it was Mr. Barrett run-  
ning wildly down to the water, but she  
attempted no remonstrance. She had  
made up her mind that of the party of  
four that went down to the sea that day  
two would probably never return, per-  
haps three. It was impossible to say  
what might happen where such impul-  
sive people were concerned.

Some men from the inn were now  
hurrying to the scene of peril, and find-  
ing it impossible to induce Mrs. Barrett  
to seek shelter, had thrown about her a  
rough tarpaulin, from the harsh folds of  
which her haggard face and wind-blown  
hair was a sorry sight to see.

The two bodies were now coming in  
atop of the foaming surf, with no help or  
hindrance of their own, and closely  
locked together, were swept swiftly  
ashore with other prey of the elements.  
They were narrowly rescued from the  
greedy maw of the returning wave, and  
carried with all speed to the little inn,  
where everything was in readiness to  
restore consciousness to the one, and fos-  
ter it in the other.

The storm passed away as suddenly as  
it came. The pale glow of twilight  
deepened into night. There was no  
moon, but the stars shone over the bay  
and the harbor and the dusky little prom-  
ontory. To look at the gentle ripples  
of waves, lapping lazily along upon the  
soft white sand, Phil could hardly be-  
lieve that so little time ago two men had  
been done almost to their death. He  
could scarcely stagger out into the  
wooden porch of the inn to breathe the  
cold sea-scented air. And as for Joe,  
God only knew what would befall him.  
He had been brought back to life, but  
not to consciousness. Polly had man-  
aged to get word to the town physician,  
but the way was long and the sand was  
heavy.

It must have been about midnight;  
Phil could not tell the exact time. His  
watch was in his waistcoat, under Miss  
Mortimer's head, in the bed of the land-  
lady. Phil had told them not to awaken  
Miss Mortimer; under no circumstances;  
he was so glad she was asleep—and it  
would be impossible to say how glad he  
was. The latch of the door clicked be-  
hind him. Phil's heart sank. He was  
afraid Miss Mortimer had, after all,  
been awakened. But a faltering, un-  
certain step reached him, and the cold  
little hand of Polly Barrett clutched his  
arm.

Any one but Phil would never have  
known her. The last remnant of her  
soft round comeliness seemed swept  
away with the storm. All her womanly

crimps and fripperies were gone. She  
wore an ill-fitting gown of the land-  
lady's. Her whole face was of a wan,  
gray pallor, like the waves under the  
cold light of the stars.

"Is Joe better?" stammered Phil.  
"Does he know—"  
"He knows everything, and perhaps  
he's better. Oh, Phil! Phil!" Polly  
repressed her sobs, and motioned Phil  
to the door. "He is determined I shall  
try and get some sleep, and that you  
shall watch him for a while. As if I  
could sleep! But go to him, Phil; don't  
thwart him—go!"

Phil went in to Joe. He will never  
forget the low-ceiled room, the two  
wooden chairs, the pine table, whereon  
a mop of ragged wick flared from a  
saucer of oil, the bottle of liquor within  
reach, and the coarse green glass, the  
grim old clock in the corner, ticking off  
the seconds, and Joe's ghastly face and  
motionless form upon the camp cot in  
the corner. Joe tried to stretch out his  
hand to Phil, but it fell back heavily  
upon the patchwork quilt of the land-  
lady.

"You did your best, Phil," he said;  
"you brought me ashore, but the trouble  
was done out there; something seized me,  
God knows what—paralysis, cramps,  
palsy—who can tell? Any-  
way, I'm done for, old man. I can't  
move a muscle below. It's a mere ques-  
tion of time, Phil, and we can't afford  
to lose any."

"I hope you're wrong, Joe; we'll  
know better when the doctor comes.  
You were right not to tell Polly. But  
she must come to you, Joe."

Phil would have gone at once for  
Polly, but something in Joe's face held  
him back.

"Hold on a bit, Phil. I didn't send  
for you and drive Polly away to tell you  
something that you'll both know soon  
enough. There's a burden on my con-  
science, Phil; it's been lying there like  
a plummet of lead all these years. Lis-  
ten and don't interrupt me if you can  
help it. Give me some of that stuff  
from the bottle, and when I grow  
weaker give me more."

Phil lifted Joe's head and put the  
glass to his lips; then he sat down  
upon the edge of the cot, leaving his  
arm between Joe's neck and the pillow.  
Joe could feel Phil's pulse now, and the  
loyal heart of his friend beating close  
to his own.

"It's twenty-five years, Phil," said  
Joe, "since that night we drove down  
to the shore here and had that talk to-  
gether. You remember it, Phil?"

"Yes, Joe."  
"Ah, you've remembered it too well.  
Phil, I've tried hard enough, God  
knows, to make you forget. The sun  
was sinking over yonder in the west,  
and sky and sea were all aflame. Some  
fleece clouds dropped low over the old  
shed where we had ordered some clams.  
I remember when I saw Polly that  
night. The dress she wore was like a  
star to me; it was of some soft floating  
material that reminded me of the woolly  
clouds over the old shed. You didn't  
eat the clams, Phil. You dined with  
the shells, and turned them over with  
the queer old fork they had given you.  
And all at once you put them aside, and  
lighted a cigar, and turned your face to  
the sea, and began to talk of a woman  
you secretly loved. Now give me some  
wine, Phil."

Phil put the glass again to Joe's lips.  
"Don't talk any more, Joe," he said.  
"Let me go for Polly."

"Not yet," said Joe. "You were a  
handsome fellow, Phil, twenty-five years  
ago. As you went on to talk of the  
woman you secretly loved, some sort of  
a light shone upon your face from the  
splendor in the west that made it like  
that of an angel. It seemed to me  
that no woman could withstand you.  
My heart grew like a lump of ice. My  
first thought was to walk out in the wa-  
ter and strangle myself; my next was  
worthy of Judas Iscariot. It was a re-  
solve to betray you. I must have been  
tempted by the devil, for, as God is my  
judge in this awful moment of my life,  
I never dreamed before that night that  
you and I were in love with the one  
woman. I got upon my feet and shout-  
ed, 'She is mine!' glaring upon you with  
a dogged, resolute stare. 'Have you,  
then, asked her to marry you?' you  
said, and your face still looked like an  
angel's, while mine must have been  
inflamed with the passions that beset a  
man beyond his strength. As I repeated:  
'She is my promised wife,' the words  
seemed to leap from a throat of fire; it  
was the first downright, hideous, mali-  
cious lie I ever uttered, for I had not  
yet asked her—I had not yet asked her;  
but when I did ask her, upon that very  
night, the next lie slipped easily from  
my perjured throat, though it was a  
worse one by far. For I told, Polly,  
Phil—I told her before I asked her to  
marry me—that you had confessed to me  
your love for her friend, the poor little  
girl that afterward became our bride-  
maid. Whether it was my guilt or con-  
science, that makes hell enough for any  
man, I fancied I saw something in  
Polly's eyes that told me, had it not  
been for my treachery, your chance  
would have been better than mine.  
Now take your arm away from my neck,  
Phil, and curse me if you will—my story  
is done."

The pulse at Joe's ear leaped and  
tugged as if it would burst an artery,  
but Phil's voice had the old tender  
ring.

"You might have spared yourself all  
this," he said. "I think Polly has  
proved who it was she loved."

"Ah, after that night, Phil, yes.  
Polly is not the kind of a woman to  
make the misery of men. But I cheated  
you of your chance—I cheated you of  
your chance!"

"Be it so, Joe. I forgive you, and I  
love you all the same. Now throw off  
the burden, and live for Polly's sake  
and mine."

"Too late, too late," faltered the fail-  
ing lips. They refused to touch the  
glass. The limp body fell back almost  
lifeless in Phil's arms. Then Joe  
aroused himself once more, and called  
for Polly in a harsh, strained voice that  
reached her despite the roar of the sea.  
She flew to his side, but was only in  
time to catch a few indistinct, disjointed  
sentences. With a last effort the dying  
man lifted the hands of his wife and his  
friend, joined them together, clasped  
his own about them, and so the three re-  
mained till the soul of Joe Barrett fled.

"And if there could be such a thing  
as witchcraft," said Miss Mortimer to  
some friends, the other day, "Joe Bar-  
rett's widow would have been burned at  
the stake long ago. She was pretty  
well on in years when Joe died, and I'll  
leave it to anybody if she don't look like  
a blonde mummy now. Phil Somers  
has that air of distinction and elegance  
about him that he might marry almost  
anybody; Joe Barrett's widow is old and  
ugly and sick and poor, but I shouldn't  
be at all surprised if Phil Somers would  
marry her yet."—Mrs. Frank McCarthy,  
in Harper's Weekly.

## A Pennsylvania Snake Story.

It has always been said by old hunters  
and woodsmen that under certain con-  
ditions a rattlesnake exudes an odor  
which is not only unbearably offensive  
to the sense of smell, but that if a per-  
son should be subjected to its presence  
for any length of time in a close room  
the result would be fatal to him. This  
has generally been looked upon as one  
of the many superstitions that prevail  
among the residents of the backwoods,  
but a case is reported from the Pocono  
region, in this county, which, if true,  
and it seems to be well substantiated,  
would indicate that the belief is founded  
on fact. The story is that two men  
from New Jersey—B. T. Altomus and  
Samuel S. Roy—while spending a few  
days in that vicinity, looking over some  
timber land with a view to purchasing  
a tract, concluded for the novelty of the  
thing, to spend one night in the woods.  
It was one of the recent very cold  
nights. The intention of the men was  
to sleep in the open air by a camp-fire,  
but the cold was so intense that they  
were driven to entering an old cabin on  
the headwaters of the Little Bushkill  
Creek, which is used by hunters in the  
fall and winter. They started a fire in  
the fire-place, and, stretching themselves  
in front of it, went to sleep. Some time  
in the night Roy awoke. There was a  
feeling of great oppression on his chest,  
and he was breathing with difficulty.  
There was a peculiar sickening smell  
in the cabin. Altomus was breathing  
heavily, and his breath came at long in-  
tervals. Roy had difficulty in awak-  
ening him, but finally aroused him, and  
both struggled to their feet. The fire  
had ceased blazing, but the room was  
very hot, a bed of red-hot coals remain-  
ing on the hearth. When the men  
arose to their feet they were seized with  
dizziness and sickness at the stomach.  
They succeeded in getting to the door,  
which they had much difficulty in open-  
ing, and finally staggered into the open  
air and fell to the ground. After a  
violent spell of vomiting and half an hour  
in the open air the strange sickness passed  
off, but left them weak and nervous.  
They remained out doors until broad  
daylight. Upon entering the cabin in  
the morning what was their horror to  
see stretched on the hearth, not ten feet  
from where they had been sleeping, five  
large rattlesnakes, which crawled away  
at the approach of the men and disap-  
peared in chinks in the chimney and  
cracks and holes in the floor. The  
peculiar odor was still apparent in the  
cabin, but the pure air that had entered  
at the open door had dissipated it to a  
great degree. The men associated their  
strange sickness in some way with the  
snakes, and at first thought they must  
have been bitten. They did not stay at  
the cabin to rout out and kill the  
snakes, but lost no time in reaching the  
nearest settlement, where they were en-  
lightened as to the theory of the woods-  
men's rattlesnake-skin poison. These  
snakes frequent deserted cabins in the  
fall, and it is not an uncommon thing  
to see them crawling from their hiding  
places even in winter after a fire has  
been built in the cabin long enough to  
warm them up.—Stroudsburg (Pa.)  
Cor. N. Y. Times.

## Mailing Indecent Letters.

In two cases recently decided in the  
West, the United States Courts have  
held that mailing an indecent letter is  
a crime under the Postal laws. These  
decisions are in direct conflict with one  
rendered a year ago by the United  
States District Court in Oregon, and  
also with a previous ruling of the  
United States Commissioner in Brook-  
lyn.

The statute which gave rise to these  
conflicting opinions declares that  
"every obscene, lewd or lascivious  
book, pamphlet, picture, paper, writing,  
print or other publication of an indecent  
character," and "every letter upon the  
envelope of which indecent words are  
written or printed," is non-mailable,  
and that whoever deposits in the mail  
any of these prohibited articles shall be  
liable to a fine of from \$100 to \$5,000  
or imprisonment from one to ten years.

In the Oregon case Judge Deady de-  
cided that a sealed letter with no ob-  
jectionable matter on the outside of the  
envelope was not within the statutory  
prohibition. To bring a letter within  
the clause of the statute, he said, it  
must be also a "publication." The  
fact that Congress had expressly pro-  
vided for the case of letters having in-  
decent matter on the outside showed  
that the statute was not intended to ap-  
ply to letters having obscene contents,  
but nothing objectionable exposed to  
view. "It was never the intention of  
the law to take cognizance of what  
passes between individuals in private  
communications under the sanctity and  
security of a seal."

In a case recently before the United  
States Circuit Court in Illinois, Judge  
Drummond took the opposite view, and  
held that it is criminal to mail an in-  
decent letter, though it be sealed and  
there be nothing objectionable on the  
envelope. In such case, however, as  
the Supreme Court of the United States  
has held, the Postoffice authorities have  
no right to open or examine the sus-  
pected letter. Evidence of its criminal  
character must be obtained from the re-  
ceiver or in some other lawful way.  
The opinion of Judge Drummond was  
concurred in by Justice Harlan, of the  
Supreme Court, and it has since been  
followed by the United States Court in  
Ohio. Its soundness is not beyond ques-  
tion, but it must now be remembered as  
a more authoritative exposition of the  
law than that previously made.—N. Y.  
Sun.

An eloping couple from Dutch  
Kills, Long Island, supposed the parents  
of the girl were in ignorance of their  
hiding place. They were greatly sur-  
prised, therefore, when one day recent-  
ly, after their marriage, the old gentle-  
man walked into their abode and made  
them a present of \$2,000, with which to  
begin life in good style.—N. Y. Times.

## How Pyrotechnics are Manufactured.

A visitor to one of those case-making  
shops, in which a good fire may be roar-  
ing in an open fire-place, will perhaps  
be rather startled to notice a number  
of barrels and jars, which he will be  
apt to assume are filled with fire-work-  
making materials of an explosive char-  
acter, or they wouldn't be in a build-  
ing with a fire in it. The London Dai-  
ly News says: These receptacles rep-  
resent the most modern development  
of the pyrotechnic art. Just take a dip  
into this barrel and bring out a little of  
its contents on the point of a knife and  
hold it in the dark part of that gas  
flame. It is arsenic of copper and sal  
ammoniac, and instantly the broad  
light of noonday and a overpowering with  
a blue glare that would have fairly as-  
tonished Friar Bacon, or the Heathen  
Chinee, or John Babington, or any other  
artist in fire of ancient days. We make  
another dive and bring out a little  
chlorate of baryta, and a dazzling out-  
burst of green is the result when placed  
in the flame. Here is a barrel of sal  
ammoniac, which is combined with  
color-giving substances to give depth  
and intensity. Another receptacle holds  
chlorate of potash, a source of oxygen  
gas, without a good supply of which  
neither fire-works nor those for whose  
enjoyment they are made can be ex-  
pected to be very bright. Some of the  
coloring substance are very perilous.  
If, for instance, a little of a compound  
of nitrate of strontia and sulphur and  
potash—the source of the most vivid  
red color known to chemists—if a lit-  
tle of this should be left after a display  
at the Crystal Palace, it is always either  
fired or buried. It is too dangerous to  
attempt to store. All this branch of  
pyrotechny is of quite recent develop-  
ment. Forty or fifty years ago colored  
fireworks were unknown, or nearly so.  
Perhaps the most delicate and interest-  
ing feature of modern fire-work-mak-  
ing is the charging of Roman candles—  
those colored balls which are puffed  
out softly into the air one after the  
other without any report and which  
are recognized as such a pretty feature  
of the Sydenham displays. The public  
like to see these balls thrown out with  
exactly an equal force so as to play just  
within the sphere. In order to secure  
this, very careful adjustment is neces-  
sary. The fiery balls of color are lit-  
tle lumps of composition filled into the  
case, and separated from each other by  
a layer of "dark fire," a little charge  
of gunpowder being just underneath.  
It is this little charge of powder which  
blows them into the air, and if all the  
charges were alike every ball would be  
thrown out a little further than its  
predecessor, because the deeper down in  
case an explosion takes place the more  
violent it is, the resistance being great-  
er. To obviate this the charge of  
powder is made to increase as the tube  
is filled up. The workman who fills  
a roman candle, therefore, has before  
him a series of little scoops of  
different sizes for measuring the  
powder, and uses them in succession,  
the smallest being used for the first ball  
put in, and the largest one for the ball  
at the mouth of the tube. The "dark  
fire" is a composition which only smol-  
ders, and which therefore, does not burn  
down to a second ball until the first has  
performed its graceful progress through  
the air. Of all fireworks the rocket is  
perhaps the most beautiful, and it cer-  
tainly is the most curious in its struc-  
ture. Some of the best of them are said  
to rise to a height of more than a third  
of a mile, and this amazing power of  
flight is secured by running very tightly  
into the rocket case a composition which  
burns fiercely and generates gas very  
rapidly when once lighted, but which  
has only a very small vent for its fury at  
the lower end of the case. The gas  
generated inside rushes out with such  
violence against the air outside that the  
rocket is driven upward by it, the tail of  
the comet consisting of the sparks of the  
fire burning within. Rocket-making  
of course forms a large part of the work  
of any fire-work factory. In one shed  
the cases are being made; in another  
building sticks are being split up and  
rounded at the head so as to fit into the  
rocket-case. In a third all sorts of  
curious burdens are being prepared for  
the fiery messenger whose heads are  
holding chambers capable of holding  
"tail stars," comets, colored stars,  
golden rain, floating lights, and a score  
of other surprises when the rocket can  
rise no higher.

## The Rye Straw Car Wheel.

The paper wheel may be larger than  
the ordinary iron wheel or it may be the  
same size. Its perpendicular surface,  
however, is always studded with bolt-  
heads. Its surface is never corrugated  
nor irregular like that of the iron wheel.  
The paper of a paper car wheel is noth-  
ing more nor less than ordinary brown  
straw board. That made wholly of rye  
straw is preferable. The boards are cut  
into discs, and holes in the center are  
punched large enough to fit the iron  
axle shoulder that constitutes the hub of  
the wheel. Thus shaped, the straw  
boards are placed one upon another with  
ordinary floor paste, till a pile of them  
about five inches high is attained. They  
are put under an hydraulic press and  
squeezed together as tightly as it is prac-  
ticable to compress matter of the con-  
sistency of straw board. The pressure  
is so great as to generate many degrees  
of heat in the compressed board. After  
being thoroughly dried, the paper wheel  
is turned on a lathe to fit the heavy steel  
tire and shell into which it is inserted  
to form the core of the wheel. It is  
held firmly in its place by an iron plate,  
the size of the inner surface of the wheel,  
and by bolts. In short, the paper of a  
paper car wheel is simply a core or fill-  
ing in a shell of steel, the outer rim or  
tire that runs on the track being nearly  
two inches thick. The durability of  
the paper wheel is the fact that it gives  
elasticity to the wheel. The durability  
of a paper wheel, on account of this  
elasticity, is computed to be many  
thousand of miles greater than that of  
the ordinary iron wheel.—N. Y. Even-  
ing Post.

Mrs. Peterson and Mrs. Deekard, of  
Boise, Idaho, started up the mountain  
side on a ramble, taking with them a  
claw-hammer to knock off any bits of  
rock that might attract their attention.  
In doing this they broke off a piece from  
a ledge, which they were surprised to  
find was rich galena ore. Mrs. Deekard  
has been offered \$1,000 for her half  
interest.—Denver Tribune.

## French Costumes.

Combinations of two materials are  
again employed in the rich costumes  
imported for autumn and winter; now  
and then a velvet dress is made entirely  
of plain velvet, but the rule is the use  
of broad velvet with plain velvet, or  
else ottoman silk with either plain vel-  
vet or with the figured velvet which is  
broadened on ottoman reps. The newest  
velvet brocades have the ground of vel-  
vet with the figures indented or sunken  
in the pile of the velvet, and of very  
gay colors on a sombre velvet back-  
ground. There are also "inlaid vel-  
vets" that have detached figures done  
in cross stitch embroidery of the color  
of the velvet; these are used as the vests  
and tabliers of plain velvet or ottoman  
silk dresses. The genuine embroideries  
by hand on velvet also furnish a figured  
fabric that combines as parts of the  
dress with plain unfigured velvet. For  
black brocaded velvets those with the  
figures outlined and veined with large jet  
beads are the fashionable choice. Pigeon  
gray, copper, dark green, golden brown,  
and dahlia colors are used in these rich  
costumes. The combinations are in  
more varied styles than they were last  
season, when the plain fabric was al-  
ways used for the upper part of the skirt;  
now the brocade may form the basque,  
with plain satin Surah for a "soft vest,"  
as modistes call the full shirred Moliere  
vest which droops below the waist, or  
else the basque may be plain velvet, and  
the brocaded velvet may form a plaited  
vest, or be used smoothly on a deep  
Franklin or Continental vest with pock-  
ets. The two materials are combined  
in the drapery, and the lower skirt, if  
allike all around, is of plain silk or vel-  
vet. The Louis Quinze coat is the name  
given to an over-dress that is medium  
short in front like a basque corsage, and  
has tabs and drapery behind that make  
it as long as a polonaise. A vest is  
really a part of the Louis Quinze coat,  
and is used to display full frills of lace  
in old time French fashion, but for  
simpler coats the vest is omitted alto-  
gether, or it is merely suggested by  
trimmings of chenille, embroidery, or  
fur, arranged to follow the outlines of a  
vest.

The French coat of plain velvet, with  
a ruche of chenille pine cones for its  
only trimming, and a skirt of repped  
ottoman silk, is an excellent model for  
the black, hunter's green, gray, brown,  
or dahlia-colored costumes about which  
correspondents are asking suggestions.  
For instance, the black ottoman silk of  
thick reps is made in a skirt two yards  
and a quarter wide, shaped precisely as  
they have been made all summer, with  
two straight back breadths, a narrow  
gore on each side, and a front gore. At  
the foot is a two-inch side-plaited, or  
gathered bias frill of velvet. Above  
this are two straight gathered ottoman  
silk ruffles, each five inches wide when  
finished, put on to lap deeply, and  
headed by a soft puff of the silk. The  
lower edge of these ruffles is cut in  
points an inch deep and an inch broad  
that are run together on the wrong side  
in a hem two inches wide. The front  
and side gores above these flounces may  
be plain, but are more dressy if covered  
with draped breadths of the silk laid  
in close, smooth, flat folds, and extend-  
ing from the belt down to the flounces in  
curves, diagonal lines, or else crossing  
each other like the crossed paniers lately  
worn, but arranged lower down on the  
skirt. The Louis Quinze coat of plain  
velvet comes evenly below the hips and  
front, like a cuirass, instead of being  
pointed, and has two half-breadths of  
the ottoman silk attached at the neck,  
and clasped by a colored pearl clasp  
there and at the waist line, below which  
it falls in a puff. This forms the so-  
called "soft